

# 2020 MARKETING GRANT GUIDELINES

EXPLORE  MINNESOTA









# TABLE OF *Contents*

Purpose	4
Project Types	4
Funding Limits	4
Eligibility	5
Requirements	6
Ineligible Expenses	7
Grant Process	8
Advertising Grants	9
Direct Mail Grants	10
Public Relations Grants	11
Trade Show Grants	11
Research Grants	12
Statewide Organizations	12
Regional Managers	13
Funding Request	14

For tourism marketing projects conducted January 1 - December 31, 2020  
Applications must be dated by **October 1, 2019**

## **PURPOSE**

### **MARKETING GRANT PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Marketing Grant is for Explore Minnesota to partner with Minnesota Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) to bring visitors to their community.

### **EXPLORE MINNESOTA MISSION**

To inspire consumers and facilitate their travel to and within the state of Minnesota.

## **PROJECT TYPES**

### **MARKETING GRANTS**

Projects targeted to individual consumers or groups of desired travelers.

- Advertising - Consumer, Travel Trade, Meetings and Sports
- Direct Mail
- Public Relations
- Trade Shows

### **RESEARCH GRANTS**

Projects of tourism-related research such as visitor profiles or niche markets, etc.

### **STATEWIDE TOURISM ORGANIZATION GRANTS**

Projects that have statewide impact and measurable outcomes.

## **PROJECT TYPES**

### **MAXIMUM GRANT AMOUNT**

A maximum of \$7,000 for one (1) individual grant and \$7,000 for one (1) multi-community grant is available per organization. Each organization is allowed to participate in one multi-community grant.

### **FINAL FUNDING AMOUNT**

Final funding for all marketing grants will be determined by the number of requests received and total amount of funding available.

### **ORGANIZATION FUNDING AMOUNT**

Only request grant funds anticipated to be used. If an organization requests more funds than they use, there may be future penalties, such as the amount available to those who have previously cancelled funds.



## **ELIGIBILITY**

### **ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS**

A private, non-profit Minnesota organization whose primary purpose is to promote its community or area as a tourism destination and/or has the promotion of its community or area as a tourism destination as a major part of its work, such as:

- Convention and Visitors Bureaus
- Tourism Bureaus
- Visitors Bureaus
- Chambers of Commerce
- Civic and Commerce Associations
- Other similar organizations dedicated specifically to the marketing of tourism

These organizations are referred to as Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs). There can only be one eligible organization per community.

### **OTHER ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS:**

- A non-profit statewide Minnesota organization representing one or more segments of the tourism industry.
- A scenic byway organization that is a non-profit Minnesota organization that includes the promotion of the scenic byway corridor as a tourism destination in its work plan.
- Native American tribes are eligible for projects focusing on Native American cultural heritage tourism.

If more than one eligible organization applies for the same community or area, requestors must work out which organization will be eligible for funding. There can only be one eligible application accepted for any community or area.

### **MULTI-COMMUNITY GRANTS**

- Multi-community grants include three or more eligible organizations.
- One eligible organization submits the application on behalf of the other organizations, listing the other organizations and the matching grant contribution from each organization.
- Participating organizations must contribute to the match in an equitable manner. No one party to a multi-community grant may contribute more than 50% of the matching grant contribution.
- The applicant organization is responsible for executing the grant contract.
- The match requirement for the entire grant will be based on the budget of the organization with the largest total budget.

### **MAXIMUM NUMBER OF GRANTS PER ORGANIZATION**

The maximum number of grants under this program awarded to any eligible organization is two. If an organization receives two grants, one must be a multi-community grant.

### **INELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS**

Private, for-profit companies, local units of government, or any organization that is not the designated Destination Marketing Organization for the community are not eligible.



## REQUIREMENTS

### EXPLORE MINNESOTA LOGO REQUIREMENTS

All grantees, regardless of project type, are required to add a current Explore Minnesota logo with a link to [exploreminnesota.com](http://exploreminnesota.com) on the homepage of their website. It is recommended that the grantee place a current Explore Minnesota logo with link to [exploreminnesota.com](http://exploreminnesota.com) in the footer of their website.

A current Explore Minnesota logo must be used in all grant projects per the guidelines below.

Failure to include a current Explore Minnesota logo in grant projects will result in cancellation of that project.

The size of the logo must be legible and proportionate to the size of the ad.

Current logos are available on the industry website, [mn.gov/tourism-industry](http://mn.gov/tourism-industry).

- Official Explore Minnesota logo is required on the following platforms
  - Billboards/Out of Home
  - Promotional Videos (all formats including YouTube, Vimeo, broadcast, etc.)
  - Print advertisements
  - Digital advertisements
  - Direct mail pieces
  - Trade Show sponsorship and recognition
- Social Media promotions require use of the #OnlyinMN hashtag
- Explore Minnesota must be mentioned in any radio/voiceover scripts

### OUT-OF-STATE MARKETING REQUIREMENT

Advertising and direct mail projects must demonstrate at least 50% of the grant award spent is distributed out of state. Proof of out-of-state distribution must be provided. For example, if an organization is requesting \$7,000 in grant funds, there must be at least \$3,500 distributed/targeted out of state.

### MATCH REQUIREMENT

All grantee project spending is required to match state funds awarded under the grant program using the following formula (or example):

Organization Total Budget	Match Requirement	Grant Request Amount	Organization Match	Total Cost of All Projects
\$100,000 or less	1:1	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$14,000
\$100,001-\$500,000	2:1	\$7,000	\$14,000	\$21,000
\$500,001+	3:1	\$7,000	\$21,000	\$28,000

1:1 Example: \$7,000 request x 2 = total project cost must meet a minimum of \$14,000

2:1 Example: \$7,000 request x 3 = total project cost must meet a minimum of \$21,000

3:1 Example: \$7,000 request x 4 = total project cost must meet a minimum of \$28,000



## REQUIREMENTS, continued

### BORDER COMMUNITIES

Incorporated convention and visitor bureaus/chambers with a Minnesota Tax ID that represent an area in Minnesota and another state are eligible to apply when they meet requirements. Explore Minnesota grant funds may only be used to promote Minnesota and its products.

### RECORDS RETENTION

Under state law, grant records must be kept available for a period of six years.

## INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

The following expenses are **not eligible** for Explore Minnesota Marketing Grant funding:

- **Any Explore Minnesota program or initiative, such as co-op advertising, booth sharing, partnerships, print publications or advertising on *exploreminnesota.com*, is not eligible.**
- Purchase of alcoholic beverages.
- Printing of community brochures and/or response pieces.
- Website development or design.
- Literature distribution.
- Fulfillment and distribution of existing materials.
- Internal staff costs.
- Advertising in materials that are used by the grantee's community for consumer inquiry response or ad fulfillment.
- Advertising in grantee's own community or area in publications or other media, including websites, newspapers, TV, radio, etc.
- Advertising in materials that are used by grantees for consumer inquiry response or ad fulfillment.
- Materials used in direct mail projects may be created for other uses; however, reimbursement must be prorated to include only costs associated with the direct mail project.
- Ads and content are not to be placed on political or unsavory websites or publications.
- Travel expenses (lodging, airfare, mileage, per diem, meals, parking). If lodging is included in the registration fee for a trade show, the value of the lodging must be deducted from the registration cost.
- Display materials.
- Trade shows where consumer attendance is coincidental to another activity such as mall shows and other events.
- Infrastructure projects such as flowers, banners, trails, maintenance and signage.
- Promotional products.



## GRANT PROCESS

All requirements from previous grants must be up-to-date to receive funding for the following calendar year.

### GRANT APPLICATION

1. Complete a Marketing Grant Request for Funding form. Maximum total request \$7,000; minimum total request \$500.
2. Marketing Grant Request for Funding forms must be emailed to Explore Minnesota or postmarked by **October 1, 2019**. Grant request totals cannot be adjusted after the due date.
3. Requests are reviewed for compliance and accuracy by Explore Minnesota. Once approved, available funds are allocated to eligible organizations. **Only request grant funds anticipated to be used.** If an organization requests more funds than they use, there may be future penalties such as the amount available to those who have previously cancelled funds.
4. Grant contracts are generated, funds are encumbered and required signatures are secured. Projects may not begin until the contract is fully executed, the date the last signature is obtained. Commitments (i.e. ad space reservations or trade show registration) may be made prior to this date, but grantee's Request for Reimbursement will not be paid if attached vendor invoices are dated prior to the fully executed grant contract.
5. Explore Minnesota sends grantee the following:
  - An award letter indicating projects may begin.
  - A fully executed grant contract.
  - A Reimbursement checklist form.
  - A blank Request for Reimbursement form.
  - A blank Project Summary and Evaluation form.
6. Vendor provides services and invoices organization for work completed to grantee within the marketing grant contract effective dates.

### GRANT REIMBURSEMENT

1. Request for Reimbursement forms and *all* supporting documentation must be emailed or postmarked to Explore Minnesota no later than **February 15, 2021**. **Only one submission per grant; no partial reimbursements will be accepted.**
2. For all projects, the following items are required for reimbursement:
  - Completed Reimbursement checklist form.
  - Completed Request for Reimbursement form.
  - Completed Project Summary and Evaluation forms for each project type.
  - Copies of all vendor invoices with dates of service
  - Proof of payment. Proof of payment includes vendor statements showing a zero balance, receipts, canceled checks or credit card/bank statements showing payment with account information redacted.
  - Screenshot of grantee's website homepage displaying EMT logo linkable to [exploreminnesota.com](http://exploreminnesota.com)

## GRANT PROCESS, continued

- For the below project types, you must also submit the following:
  - **Advertising Projects**
    - Billboard/Out of Home - Photo or screenshot with Explore Minnesota logo
    - Print - Original copy or tear sheet with Explore Minnesota logo
    - Digital - Screenshot of advertisements with Explore Minnesota logo
    - Social Media - Screenshot of posts with #OnlyinMN hashtag
    - Radio/Voiceover - Copy of script or audio file recognizing Explore Minnesota
    - Promotional Video/Broadcast - link to video with Explore Minnesota logo
    - Proof of out-of-state distribution (50% of grant award)
  - **Direct Mail** - Original copy of direct mail piece with Explore Minnesota logo and proof of out-of-state distribution (50% of grant award)
  - **Research** - Copy of research study, recognizing Explore Minnesota as a partner
  - **Public Relations** - Copy of public relations campaign plan and deliverables recognizing Explore Minnesota
  - **Trade Shows** - Sponsorships including recognition of Explore Minnesota
- 3. Explore Minnesota will reimburse for funds within 30 days after the State determines that the Grantee has satisfactorily fulfilled all the terms of their grant agreement, and has received a complete reimbursement request which includes a grant reimbursement request form, copy of all vendor invoice(s), proof of payment and all other supporting documentation including the grantee's cash match, EMT logo and out-of-state market requirements.
- 4. IRS rules require government entities to file 1099-G forms for certain government payments. Minnesota Management and Budget will be issuing 1099-G forms for these contracts. Please check with your organization's tax expert to determine what effect this may have on your IRS filing.

## ADVERTISING GRANTS

Consumer Advertising, Travel Trade Advertising, Meetings and Conventions, and Sports Advertising January 1 - December 31, 2020

### CONSUMER ADVERTISING

Projects targeting individual consumers.

### TRAVEL TRADE, MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS, AND SPORTS ADVERTISING

Projects with primary distribution to tour operators, tour planners and/or travel agents, advertising in meeting and convention media, and targeted sports media.

### ELIGIBLE EXPENSES FOR ALL ADVERTISING

Media costs for broadcast, print, digital (mobile, banners, search engine marketing, etc.), billboards/out of home, television or radio advertising. Costs for campaign creation and management are eligible as long as an outside professional vendor is used and there is documentation of ad placement.



## **ADVERTISING GRANTS, continued**

### **OUT-OF-STATE MARKETING REQUIREMENT**

Advertising and direct mail projects must demonstrate at least 50% of the grant award is distributed out of state. Proof of out-of-state distribution must be provided. For example, if an organization is requesting \$7,000 in grant funds, there must be at least \$3,500 distributed/targeted out of state.

### **EXPLORE MINNESOTA LOGO REQUIREMENT**

- Official Explore Minnesota logo is required on the following platforms:
  - Billboard/Out of Home
  - Promotional videos (all formats including YouTube, Vimeo, broadcast, etc.)
  - Print advertisements
  - Digital advertisements
- Social Media promotions require use of #OnlyinMN hashtag
- Explore Minnesota must be mentioned in any radio/voiceover scripts

### **SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)**

Search engine optimization (SEO) is eligible if performed by an outside professional vendor.

## **DIRECT MAIL GRANTS**

Direct Mail Projects to Consumers, Travel Trade, Meeting and Convention, or Sports Marketing Media January 1 - December 31, 2020

### **DIRECT MAIL PROJECTS FOR CONSUMERS, TRADE OR MEDIA**

The direct mail grant can cover design and distribution of new material used exclusively for direct mail or email marketing. Materials used in direct mail projects may be created for other uses; however, reimbursement must be prorated to include only costs associated with the direct mail project.

### **OUT-OF-STATE MARKETING REQUIREMENT**

Advertising and direct mail projects must demonstrate at least 50% of the grant award spent is distributed out of state. Proof of out-of-state distribution must be provided. For example, if an organization is requesting \$7,000 in grant funds, there must be at least \$3,500 distributed/targeted out of state.

### **TARGET AUDIENCE**

Consumers, tour operators, travel agents, meeting planners, sport planners

### **ELIGIBLE EXPENSES**

- Costs incurred for acquiring, sorting or renting a database from an outside professional vendor
- Campaign creation and management costs from an outside professional vendor
- Production and print costs
- Distribution, shipping and/or postage costs including a central distribution or direct mail vendor

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS GRANTS**

January 1 – December 31, 2020

The public relations grant can cover costs incurred in the planning and implementation of an overall tourism-focused public relations plan. Project must be done by an outside professional vendor. Explore Minnesota must be recognized in all materials and press releases. The grantee's regional manager must approve the public relations plan in advance.

### **ELIGIBLE EXPENSES**

Hiring a public relations firm to assist with the following duties:

- Identify media trends, consumer interests, target markets/media outlets
- Editorial calendar development and outreach
- Crafting and distribution of approved press releases and wire releases
- Development of long- and short-lead pitches

### **MEASUREMENTS REQUIRED**

- Copy of public relations campaign plan recognizing Explore Minnesota
- Copy of public relations deliverables recognizing Explore Minnesota

## **TRADE SHOW GRANTS**

U.S. and International Travel Trade, Sport and Travel Shows, Meetings and Conventions, and Sports Marketing Shows January 1 – December 31, 2020\*

### **U.S. and International Travel Trade, Sports and Travel Shows, Meetings and Conventions, and Sports Marketing Shows**

U.S. and international trade shows held outside of Minnesota where attendees include individual consumers, travel trade representatives such as tour operators, tour planners, travel agents, meeting planners or sports event organizers, and trade media.

\*EXCEPTION: The American Bus Association and IPW Travel Trade Shows for 2021 may be included in this grant cycle.

### **QUALIFICATIONS:**

- All shows must be pre-approved by your Explore Minnesota regional manager
- All shows must be located outside of Minnesota
- Commitments (i.e. trade show registration) may be made prior to contract date, but grantee's Request for Reimbursement will not be paid if attached vendor invoices are dated prior to the fully executed grant contract.

### **ELIGIBLE EXPENSES:**

- Registration fees (for up to two people)
- Rental of booth space
- Utilities, furniture rental, carpet and cleanup costs
- Shipping materials to the show
- Show sponsorship fees for additional visibility and recognition prior to/during/after the show so long as it is not tied to a cooperative effort or other Explore Minnesota promotion. Grantee must use the Explore Minnesota logo on printed/digital materials.



## RESEARCH GRANTS

January 1 – December 31, 2020

The research grant can cover costs incurred in conducting tourism research projects such as market analysis or visitor profiles. Project must be done by an outside vendor. Explore Minnesota must be identified as a sponsor on all materials. Projects may be conducted by a single community or a multi-community\* group.

\*For research grants only, two or more eligible Minnesota organizations partnering together can comprise a multi-community group. One community submits the request and lists each participating community with a breakdown of each organization's cash match percentage

### QUALIFICATIONS

Explore Minnesota must approve study focus, methodology and budget in advance. Interested organizations are urged to contact their regional manager early in the planning process.

### ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

- Survey collection costs (includes outgoing and reply postage, telephone solicitation and personal interview costs)
- Printing costs (for the research survey instruments and finished studies)
- Data entry costs
- Research analysis/final compilation costs performed by an outside vendor

*NOTE: University of Minnesota Tourism Center. For additional research funding, please consult with the University of Minnesota's Carlson Chair for Travel, Tourism and Hospitality: [tourism.umn.edu/invest/carlson-chair.edu](http://tourism.umn.edu/invest/carlson-chair.edu)*

## STATEWIDE TOURISM ORGANIZATION GRANTS

January 1 – December 31, 2020

Special grants are available to statewide organizations that are producing materials and/or conducting marketing projects that promote the entire state.

The project must have statewide impact and projected outcomes falling within one of the strategic objectives of Explore Minnesota.

The organization must submit a proposal that includes stated objectives, responsibilities, funding and evaluation and must discuss the potential project with the appropriate regional manager as a first step.

The maximum total request for special grants is \$7,000 per organization. Tourism Marketing Grant Request for Funding forms must be e-mailed or postmarked by **October 1, 2019**.

Project information needed (applicants must follow this format):

1. Summary of proposal: Be specific - include proposed project and timeline.
2. Indicate how the project has statewide economic impact and falls within Explore Minnesota's mission. The mission of Explore Minnesota is to promote and facilitate increased travel to and within the state of Minnesota.

## STATEWIDE TOURISM ORGANIZATION GRANTS, *continued*

3. Provide information on expected outcomes and proposed performance evaluation method (examples: total number of inquiries, names and addresses generated, sales tax generated).
4. Specify organization and state resources requested, including specific project budget. Provide a breakdown of amount and source of all income and resources committed to this project.
5. History, if this is not a new project.  
*NOTE: If the project is printing a statewide guide, organization must provide history of production and distribution, number recycled, and distribution plan for proposed guide - associations are responsible for distribution of their own guides. In addition, guides and the distribution plan of the guides cannot be duplicative of any other guide.*
6. Relationship of project to your organization's overall marketing strategy. Include total tourism promotion budget for your organization.

## EXPLORE MINNESOTA TOURISM REGIONAL MANAGERS

### SOUTHERN REGION

**Lisa Havelka**

PO BOX 454

Medford, MN 55049

Phone: 507-389-2683

1-888-975-6766

E-mail: [lisa.havelka@state.mn.us](mailto:lisa.havelka@state.mn.us)

### NORTHWEST REGION

**David Bergman**

1311 North Duluth

Thief River Falls, MN 56701

Phone: 218-681-0997

1-888-563-7777

E-mail: [david.bergman@state.mn.us](mailto:david.bergman@state.mn.us)

### NORTHEAST REGION

**Tim Campbell**

11 East Superior Street, Suite 550

Duluth, MN 55802

Phone: 218-302-6378

1-888-876-6784

E-mail: [tim.campbell@state.mn.us](mailto:tim.campbell@state.mn.us)

### METRO REGION/STATEWIDE ORGANIZATIONS

**Lori Peterson**

121 7th Place East, Suite 100

St. Paul, MN 55101-2146

Phone: 651-757-1876

1-800-657-3637

Fax: 651-296-7095

E-mail: [lori.a.peterson@state.mn.us](mailto:lori.a.peterson@state.mn.us)

### CENTRAL REGION

**Nicole Lalum**

322 Laurel Street, Suite 32

Brainerd, MN 56401

Phone: 218-316-3330

1-888-629-6466

Mobile: 218-232-0883

E-mail: [nicole.lalum@state.mn.us](mailto:nicole.lalum@state.mn.us)





Explore Minnesota  
121 7th Place East, Suite 360  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101  
USA

[exploreminnesota.com/industry-minnesota](http://exploreminnesota.com/industry-minnesota)